

**T**his brochure provides you with information on low back pain and the kinds of treatment that are available, including chiropractic treatment.

Some people are at greater risk for low back problems because they are in poor physical condition or do work that requires heavy labor or sitting for a long period of time. Stress and inactivity may also make back problems seem worse. You are not alone if you have a low back problem, eight out of ten adults will have low back problem sometime in their life.

#### **Low back pain is sometimes caused by:**

- ☞ Poor muscle tone in the back
- ☞ Muscle tension or spasm
- ☞ Back sprain
- ☞ Ligament or muscle tears
- ☞ Joint problems
- ☞ Disc problems.
- ☞ Occasionally, serious diseases such as cancers



#### **Symptoms of low back pain include:**

- ☞ Pain or discomfort in the lower part of the back.
- ☞ Pain or numbness that moves down the leg.

**If you are experiencing back pain that keeps you from doing daily activities or back pain that lasts more than a few days you should talk with your VA primary care provider.**

#### **If you have any of these symptoms, you should contact your primary care provider immediately:**

- ☞ Problems controlling your bladder.
- ☞ Numbness in the groin or rectal area.
- ☞ Extreme leg weakness.

### **Treatment For Back Pain**

#### **Effective treatments for low back pain include:**

- ☞ Drugs- such as muscle relaxants and anti-inflammatory drugs.
- ☞ Back exercise/back training.
- ☞ Spinal manipulation and mobilization
- ☞ Surgery
- ☞ Chiropractic care



### **Questions & Answers About Chiropractic Care**

#### **1. What is chiropractic?**

Chiropractic treatment is sometimes effective for relief of back pain, especially low back pain.

Chiropractic treatment is a healing art and does not use drugs or surgery. Chiropractic care usually focuses on examining the spine and pelvis to make sure your spine is working properly or not.

#### **2. What is a Doctor of Chiropractic?**

Chiropractors hold a degree from an accredited chiropractic college and are licensed by the state in which they practice.



### 3. How do chiropractors treat patients?

A Chiropractic doctor reviews a patient's case history, uses x-rays, lab tests and lifestyle changes such as nutrition and exercise.

They pay special attention to the spine, arms, legs, nervous and muscle systems, and the skeleton. They may recommend massage, different forms of exercise and changes in diet to treat patients.

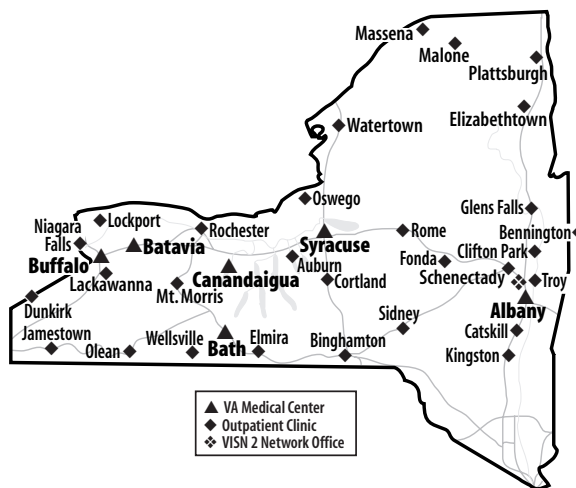
### Eligibility

If you are enrolled in VA Health Care you are eligible for chiropractic treatment. You will need to make an appointment with your VA health care provider to discuss using chiropractic care to treat your lower back pain. In some instances, your provider may require you to see a VA specialist first and receive rehabilitation therapy before referring you to a chiropractor.

The VA only pays for chiropractic services related to manipulation of the spine.

You can receive chiropractic care for spinal manipulation under certain conditions. The VA does not currently have chiropractors on staff but will pay for chiropractic treatments if you and your VA primary provider decide it is necessary.

## Reaching Us Is Easy



### VA Healthcare On The Web

<http://www.va.gov/visns/visn02/>

You'll find more than 1500 pages designed to make it easy for veterans to access accurate, up-to-date information about VA healthcare. You'll also find specific information on VA Women Veterans Health Services.

### Upstate New York Veterans ~

Wherever you are, When you need help ...

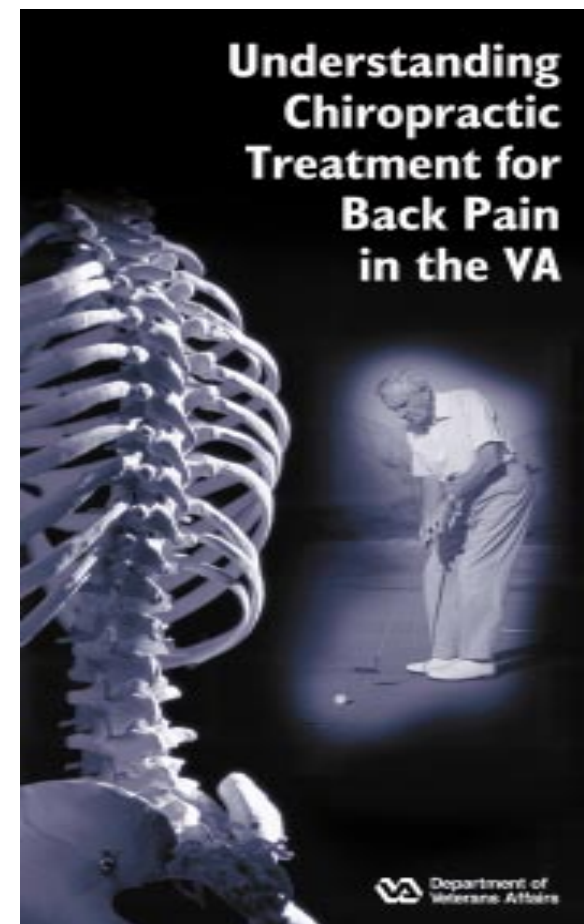
**VA TELCARE**

**1-888-838-7890**

Designed and printed at the Bath VA Medical Center

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*Leading Health Care  
In The 21st Century*



*Understanding Back Pain  
and Chiropractic Treatment*

